



Committee on Student Fees and Budget Review

UNIT REPORT: UC POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Introduction to the Unit

The University of California Police Department (UCPD) serves as the protective unit for the campus and students. UCPD is split into multiple divisions, with the primary ones being Patrol, Business Services and Community Service Officers. Falling under the Patrol umbrella are the standard patrol cars, detectives, crime prevention which handles cardkey access to campus buildings and other building security, and the Office of the Chief which covers training and administrative work. Community Service Officers are a student run organization within UCPD whose primary responsibility is the operation of BearWalk. The department also has a fully functional bomb unit, SWAT team, dogs, etc. The majority of UCPD's funding comes through the UC campus, however budget cuts over the past 10 years have been very difficult to recover from.

Unit Director Meeting Findings

On November 7th, Adam King, a CSF Analyst, and Michelle Chan, the CSF Co-Chair, met with Alex Yao, the Director of Operations at UCPD. The interview focused on where UCPD is allocating their Student Services Fee funding, the Bait Bike program, and the overall financial situation of the Police Department.

UCPD is not in a deficit, and has been so for all of recent memory. However, during their first budget cuts in the late 2000s, UCPD had to cut a significant number of officer positions. Thus the workload per officer has been growing ever since. Mr. Yao explained that losing positions not only increases workload, but also tends to increase crime rates. The majority of UCPD's costs are related to salary and benefits, which are difficult to sustain because salaries are continually rising. As a result, UCPD must cut spending on other aspects such as new technology and educational programs.

Currently, UCPD's Student Services Fee allocation is around \$140,000 and is directly applied to the salary of a detective position that focuses on cases involving students with mental health issues. This detective works closely with the Tang Center and the Student Conduct Office in cases regarding mental health problems or conduct-related cases. Often times, this involves a student detained for mental health issues if they are in danger of hurting themselves or others. The mental health issue rarely involves criminal activity, and the detective position is used as a resource to provide support

and guidance to the student. This detective typically handles 70-80 cases a year, and the number of cases has been rising incrementally since the creation of this position. Mr. Yao emphasized the positive reception that this position has received in the Berkeley community, and how he is placing a financial focus on continuing the funding towards this position. Mr. Yao said that in the future, it would be beneficial to have additional similar positions.

Lastly, Mr. Yao discussed the Bait Bike program, which is a new program funded by a one-year funding request made to the Chancellor last year. The UCPD applied for funding for bait bikes as well as equipment to monitor and track these bikes. The purpose of this program is to catch long-time bike thieves in the Berkeley area and lower bike theft on campus. The program will be rolled out later in the year, but UCPD has already run a very successful trial program.

Compliance with Guidelines

The SSF guidelines indicate that the student services fee is intended for use for, but not limited to: services related to psychological health and well-being of students, social and recreational programs, services related to campus life and community, and career support.

The Mental Health detective position, where almost all of the SSF funding is used, serves students and is very vital and beneficial to the campus. This position provides a service that “directly benefits students”, but this mental health detective does not serve “a core instructional purpose”. There seems to be no issue with compliance.

Preliminary Recommendations

My preliminary recommendation is that SSF funding for the UCPD is maintained through the upcoming year. UCPD is not facing a dire financial deficit, nor appears to demonstrate a significant need for increased funding. If funding were to decrease, it would significantly harm the Mental Health detective position, and may even eliminate the position entirely. In a time when the student population is placing such a large focus on mental health, I would strongly advocate against decreasing UCPD’s funding. If a small increase in funding were possible, it would help match rising salary costs, but this need is not immediate.